



QTC Magazine

The Radio Amateur Society of Australia

May 2026



Antennapalooza 2026 Wrap
Gus visits Antennapalooza
RASA Team sets goals
Lord Howe Island DXpedition

Regular features:

Dits n Dahs, DX Happenings, ZL News, Club Support, Contests, RASA Resources

In This Issue:

From the President	
Editorial	
Antennapalooza 2026	
Project GUS visits ANTENNAPALOOZA	
Elite Communications	
The VK Regulations Maze	
Advertising in QTC	
Resources for New Amateurs	
Dits n Dahs	
NZART Centennial Conference	
Sangster Shield Contest (NZ)	
How to Support RASA	
RASA Visits Caboolture Radio Club	
VK Budget QSL Cards	
Welcome to Amateur Radio Brochure	
Lord Howe Island DXpedition	
Contests	
DX Happenings	
Club Support	
Your Club Promos in QTC	

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15	QTC is Copyright © 2026
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22	A perfect late afternoon setting for Antennapalooza. Bob VK6POP
22	
23	Contributing Items For QTC Magazine
24	
25	QTC Magazine welcomes contributions for future editions. When planning to submit an article, please read our submission guidelines first.
26	
29	Following the guidelines will save you and the editing team a lot of time and effort. The guidelines are HERE
30	
33	
34	



From the President

Paul VK2APA

As the RASA Management team were in attendance for Antennapalooza we took the time afterwards to talk face to face and continue our strategic planning for the next 12 months or so. RASA has been called “The On-Line Amateur Club” by our detractors, but this also allows us to be lean and agile and in a better place to serve the AR Community.



What is strategic planning?

Strategic planning serves as a continuous "road-map" that enables a national amateur radio organisation to remain a progressive advocate for all VK amateurs. In a time of swift technological advancements, a well-defined strategy guarantees sustained viability.

This can be broken down to;

Review: What did we do in the past?

Utilise “Success Metrics” to measure the success and analyse the failures. Retain the positive aspects while modifying or eliminating the negative ones.

Mission: What do we do today?

Listen to the whole of the AR community to provide support to all Radio Amateurs. "To protect, promote, and advance the art of amateur radio." set ways to measure success for later review.

Vision: Where are we going?

Again, Listen to the whole of the AR community to support the direction the hobby is taking. "Support a vibrant, diverse community that is at the forefront of radio innovation."

Then back to Review...

Some of the Topics discussed were;

- The success of the “This is Amateur Radio” brochure – 3000+ have been distributed so far and requests are still coming in.
- Public displays - e.g. The recent hobby show
- Club presentations – RASA is looking to do more presentations in 2026-27
- Examining our internet presence and what can be improved.
- Ongoing regulatory matters with the ACMA
- Reviewed the success of the Foundation Licence Study Guide (FLSG)– still a popular download.
- Review of education materials FLSG VK REGS and plans for future materials.

Some admin for the upcoming Annual General Meeting

- QTC Magazine - is it working? Is the content good?

None of this is possible without your input and support. Remember that you can always suggest ideas or ask questions to the RASA Team at anytime via email to info@vkradioamateurs.org



QTC

From the Editor



I had the pleasure, along with the whole RASA team, of attending Antennaplaoza in the days before the RASA annual team meeting. I believe there were about sixty people there over the weekend. Most stayed onsite in their tents, campers and caravans.

Something that's very obvious at these gatherings is the thing that binds us - in this case, and this group it's Amateur Radio providing the common bond.

I pondered on this common bond thing. We all had different backgrounds and held different places on the Amateur Radio platform, yet the common bond was the core interest and skillset upon which we base our broad hobby known as Amateur Radio.

Events such as Antennapalooza, although wrapped in a blanket of technical subject delivery, perform a far greater function in bringing people together. People from all walks of life, with diverse interests, who come together for the social interaction, which is at least as important if not more so, as the technical content.

Next weekend I plan to attend HamCamption at Mayanup in Western Australia. a similar weekend to Antennaplaoza, with no formal presentations, where attendees set up their portable stations in a weekend of show and tell. And not a small amount of talking.

This Month in QTC there's a wrap on Antennaplaoza, and a separate story on

Gus, a rather cute, unmanned mechanical forward observation device.

There's a new DXPedition announced for Lord Howe Island coming up soon.

We have our regular columns - DX Happenings, Dits n Dahs, ZL News, and Contests.

In QTC we heavily promote the resources and services provided by RASA. For our regular readers this may appear a bit repetitive, however it's important that it's there and visible when an Amateur Radio newcomer pops in for a look.

Our most recent success is the brochure, "Welcome to Amateur Radio", designed by RASA and distributed to clubs in mid 2025. This brochure was specifically designed as a handout for a member of the public after a discussion with an Amateur at a Hamfest, Trade fair etcetera. There's space on the brochure to place a label with club contact information. RASA paid for the printing, and asked clubs to cover postage where they could.

Of note is RASA's policy of providing resources free to all Amateurs. There is no requirement of membership or affiliation to access RASA resources.

Finally, if you think RASA is doing a good job, perhaps you'd consider joining the team. We're always on the lookout for help writing stories for the magazine, and researching for responses to regulatory issues.

Antennapalooza 2026

By Ian VK3BUF



Amateur radio is both a personal and social adventure.

Sometimes it is a solo venture with a chair, a table and a radio, and sometimes it is an event of shared experiences.

Antennapalooza is definitely in the second category. 2026 was the tenth year of this auspicious field event where visitors from several clubs East of Melbourne and some from further afield gathered literally in a field to have some fun.

This year it took place two weeks after Easter following the conclusion of many rainy days. The wind dropped, the sun came out and approximately 60 visitors were treated to two splendid days of presentations and activities. As with previous years, it was staged in the bottom paddock of a Drouin West property.

The event was sponsored by The Gippsland Gate Radio & Electronics Club (GGREC), the Frankston and Mornington Peninsula Amateur Radio Club (FAMPARC), The Southern Peninsula Amateur Radio Club (SPARC), The Pride Amateur Radio Group and RASA.

This year the theme was around power systems and several presentations were



made under the pavilion. On Saturday, Mark VK3PKT did a walk-through of his portable power systems. Chris VK3QB gave a delightful introduction into the world of CW operation. Dave VK3JL detailed the contemporary requirements for electrical safety around the home. Jim VK3UFO described the energy balancing act of living entirely off-grid.

For those who stayed overnight, Saturday evening saw a major Pizza run from nearby

Drouin to service a ring of campers around a cosy fire pit.

On Sunday, Ian VK3BUF described the ways in which voltage drops can drastically affect AC and DC power systems.



Sunday also included a visit from the team at Outlook Industries, who demonstrated Project Gus, a semi-autonomous electric cart for military applications that is being produced in Gippsland. Luke Townsend VK3ZOG gave a splendid Q & A on how this technology had been developed and how it is currently being used.

After the demonstration vehicle was remotely driven around the paddock, it was opened and its portable power systems were displayed and discussed. A more complete article on GUS is published elsewhere in this edition.

The GUS demonstration was followed by a short forum hosted by Paul VK2APA and other members of the RASA team, discussing the challenges that are currently faced by clubs and groups in the promotion and educational aspects of Amateur Radio.

The weather turned out to be picture perfect. Several campsites put up their own antennas and made some contacts.

Geordie VK3CLR finished fabricating his HF beam antenna formed from orange conduit and sections of tape measures.



After the completion of the event, a team of volunteers pitched in to take down and fold the large pavilion on the grass that had formed the meeting place for presentations.

These events are successful because they are free, require no booking and for most, less than an hour's drive from home. It brings together people of many clubs in an atmosphere where it's easy to kick back in a folding chair, with refreshment in hand and chat about everything Amateur Radio. More images on the next page.





Project GUS visits ANTENNAPALOOZA

By Ian VK3BUF

The theme for the Antennapalooza event this year was power technology. A superb example of this technology in action was demonstrated by Luke Townsend VK3ZOG and Hasitha Hewawasam VK3AKU on their mobile sensory platform called GUS. Gus is an acronym for **Ground Un-manned System**.



The company which has produced GUS is called Outlook Industries. They operate from the town of Yinnar in Gippsland. Here they have developed and now manufacture, several versions of this mobile sensory equipment. It utilises a complex integration of battery and charging systems which enables these vehicles to be sent remotely into field positions for many weeks at a time.



GUS is essentially a scout platform that can conduct extended surveillance at key locations with a patience that is difficult for human soldiers to achieve. It is not intended for direct contact with an enemy.

One of its early applications is to monitor for poachers of endangered wildlife in West Africa. A serious activity that has cost many lives of rangers and military personnel.

Luke Townsend is no stranger to military operations. He has seen duty with the ADF in East Timor and Afghanistan and has firsthand experience of how small enhancements of technology in the right place can greatly impact engagements of conflict. Luke is the leader of the company.

Hasitha has years of experience in robotics. He is the electronics and software developer of the project. Several aspects of invention incorporated within GUS are unique. Other team members not able to be present on that day, have brought other valuable skill sets to the project. This includes steering technology, metal fabrication and essential sheet metal work.

On Sunday of the Antennapalooza event Luke and Hasitha arrived with a boxed trailer, lowered the ramp and rolled out one of their field units. Luke then spoke at



length about the project development and the motivations that have brought their team to where they are today.

Inside each unit are draws of electronics for power management, motor & steering control, communications and surveillance technology. The wheels and gearbox hardware are also Australian made.

In this age of readily available communications equipment that reaches into the GHz range, it is

easy to consider RF equipment as simple building blocks, without the understanding that makes them work. For their own personal interest, most of the Outlook Industries team have acquired their Amateur radio licences to achieve a better understanding of what is really going on in the RF spectrum.

Amateur Radio is a broad school that teaches people to get a feel for this invisible medium and to understand where its true strengths and limitations lay. Project Gus does not utilise Amateur frequencies, but it does have transmitters, receivers and antennas. Understanding the capabilities of analogue and digital transmission under adverse field conditions is something that Amateurs do better than most. This knowledge has complemented what is being achieved in Project Gus.

We were grateful to Luke and Hasitha for taking the time to share their journey with visitors from the several clubs that make up Antennapalooza. Luke commented that he had made many presentations to groups in recent years, but under the pavilion on that day, no other group had displayed such a keen interest, or asked such penetrating questions as our assembly of Radio Amateurs, all observing intently from their folding chairs.

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The VK Regulations Maze

Newcomers and oldtimers alike can feel lost in the maze of rules and regulations covering the hobby of Amateur Radio.



The governing document for Amateur Radio is the Radiocommunications Licence Conditions (Amateur Licence) Determination 2025 (the LCD), which is a set of regulations authorised by the Australian Telecommunications Act 1992.

When you read through the LCD, it has the same appearance and feel as an Act of Parliament, and it is a source of confusion for many.

RASA's response to this was to compile a handbook to assist you to navigate through the regulations and operational procedures, and to understand what you can and must do in order to operate within the conditions of the Australian Amateur Radio Class Licence.

The Australian Amateur Radio Regulations Handbook is available for online viewing at the [RASA website](#)



Radio for the Curious & Creative

The Radio Amateur Society of Australia

QTC Ads

QTC welcomes advertisements from suppliers of Amateur Radio and related equipment and services. We appreciate the financial support and set our rates to ensure every business can afford to advertise.

Rates are as follows and are per issue.

Advertisers are also invited to make a regular monthly (or one-off) donation to RASA in place of a fixed advertisement fee per issue.

Contact info@vkradioamateurs.org to discuss.

Advert size	Price	
¼ page	\$30	80x123
½ page	\$50	160x123mm
Full page	\$95	160x247mm

The 2026 Mike Beall Memorial HamCemption

Mayanup OF86fb

Rock up with your camp/caravan/radio gear from lunch time Friday. \$10 PP Per night.

Resources for New Amateurs



Your Gateway to the World of Amateur Radio

Amateur Radio provides virtually unlimited opportunities for you to explore the technical, scientific and social aspects of this truly global hobby

A Free Amateur Radio Learning Resource

This multimedia learning resource has been developed by RASA and is provided free of charge.



Like all RASA resources, the FLSG is free, and we encourage you to share it with your club, friends and others who may be interested in becoming a radio amateur.

This resource is backed up by our other award-winning resources, including QRM Guru, the Welcome to Amateur Radio Guidebook, and VKRegs.

This resource is unique. Not only is it up-to-date with the latest information on the Class Licence, but it includes tailored instructional videos, links to useful websites, and extra “good to know” learning opportunities. All of this is backed up by a Knowledge Base with an integrated email-based helpdesk. So if you have feedback or questions, you can easily raise a ticket.

The FLSG is available [HERE](#)

The RASA Welcome to Amateur Radio Guidebook provides an introduction to our hobby for new Foundation class amateurs.

The book is published digitally. It contains many hotlinks to external websites with useful information.

It is available as an Acrobat pdf file suitable for reading on a PC or tablet. It can be printed if required.

Download the guidebook [HERE](#).



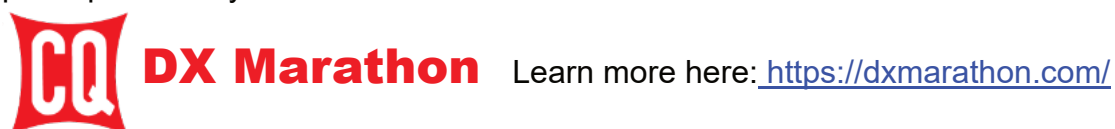
Dits n Dahs

By Chris VK3QB

DXpedition - DX Marathon - VJ2L

Next month a team of 7 operators will activate Lord Howe Island. The good news for readers of this column is that 6 of the 7 are CW operators. This is a great chance to hone your pileup skills and see how many bands you can get in the log.

While you're at it, check our DX-Marathon. It's a fun and easy contest that you can participate in at your own rate.



More details about this DXpedition are covered elsewhere in this edition of QTC.



CW Academy

Semester 2 for CW Academy started this month. It's really encouraging to see so many people want to learn or build on their Morse code skills. This time around I'm running Beginners and Fundamentals classes.

The general feedback has been very positive and as long as there is demand CW Academy will continue delivering classes at times suitable to the VK and ZL communities.

Already I've heard from students from last semester who are reporting amazing improvements in their code and the enjoyment and satisfaction that accompanies this success. One Intermediate student who was very pleased to be having relaxed QSOs around 18 wpm is now practicing at 25 wpm and doing stints at 30 wpm.

If you'd like to learn the code, or simply want to polish up your existing skills, CW Academy has the runs on the board, having taught over 11,000 students worldwide. The program works very well. To learn more visit: <https://cwops.org/cw-academy/>

New resource to help CW operators

Off the back of CW Academy I get a lot of questions and feedback suggesting a resource tailored to the specific needs of VK and ZL would be useful. You can check it out here: <https://masteringmorse.com/>



It also includes a YouTube channel with the recording of the interviews I've been conducting since January 2026. The website is structured a little like www.qrm.guru in that it has a knowledge base sitting behind the base code enabling smarter searches to find what you're looking for.

If you're just starting out or looking for some hints and tips check it out.

If you have any questions or feedback about the site please send me an email.

YouTube - Interview with Callum M0MCX from DX-Commander

Last month I interviewed Callum M0MCX from DX-Commander. Callum shared his story of how he got into ham radio and then the journey from antenna experimentation to the commercially successful DX-Commander antennas.

Callum also shared his experience with regards the vertical antenna and how the DX-Commander has evolved over the last 10 years. He finished up reminding us that *"self-improvement, education and experiments are tenets of the hobby"*. If you aren't working any DX, try building a simple 20 metre $\frac{1}{4}$ vertical with 4 elevated radials or 16 ground radials (32 would be even better).

You can watch the interview [HERE](#).

If you're looking for some regular activities to help build your skills, on-air confidence, or just to be part of an organised event, check the schedule below.

Morse Code Live Interviews via Zoom

The next Morse Code Zoom session is on 20th May at 09:00Z (UTC)

This month I'll be chatting with some of the team joining me on Lord Howe Island next month. If you've ever wondered how we plan and make these DXpeditions happen this should be an interesting session. We'll also talk about how you can break the pileup and get us in your log.

We are sure to have a great session, hearing about Callum's involvement in the hobby and why his antennas have become so well known around the world.

Join the Zoom Meeting – Click [HERE](#) and include your name and callsign when in the waiting room so Chris can admit you to the session.

Strange CW-like signals on 40 metres

This is repeated from last month.

Various people have reported strange CW like signals around 7.041 MHz with what appears to be paired signals further up the band. It is possible to pull what sounds like a bit of Morse code out of it from time to time, but the general consensus is that this is not a Morse code transmission.

Someone sent me this [YouTube video](#), and it offers an interesting explanation.



Upcoming Events

Monday - Medium Speed Test (MST)

Great practice at around 20-25WPM [WEB](#)

Times: Every Monday: 1300-1400Z and 1900-2000Z

Every Tuesday: 0300-0400Z

Tuesday night – CQ QRS net – 80, 40 & 20m. CW segments of the bands. Typically, 12-18WPM [WEB](#)

Wednesday Wrap – 80, 40 & 20 metres. 0900UTC – 1200UTC, FDU Frequencies x.028 +/- (included some fast code practice for those interested) [WEB](#)

CW Test (CWT)

Great practice but a bit manic speed wise. Mostly 28WPM-40WPM [WEB](#)

Times: Every Wednesday: 1300-1400Z and 1900-2000Z

Every Thursday: 0300-0400Z and 0700-0800Z

NZ Net, which has been operating daily on 7.030 MHz at 0800 UTC, changes to 3.535 MHz at 0900 UTC for the duration of the southern Winter, effective Sunday 5 April. The net welcomes all check-ins, with or without traffic.

RandomGram

Date: To be confirmed, but usually 3rd or 4th Sunday of the Month

Click the image for the website.

A different kind of activity: RandomGrams

By Chris VK3QB

This segment is a duplication from last month - as a reminder!





Last month Stan ZL3TK finally convinced me to try out the monthly RandomGram event.



RandomGram is a unique Morse code event that prioritises accuracy over speed. Unlike standard contests where operators exchange predictable information like serial numbers, RandomGram requires participants to accurately exchange groups of random characters.

Key Features

- **Accuracy-Focused:** Scores are determined entirely by how accurately random character groups are transmitted and received.
- **Even Playing Field:** Because the character groups are random, operators cannot "guess" or use software to auto-fill information, making it accessible to operators of all skill levels.
- **SWL Participation:** Shortwave Listeners (SWL) can participate by monitoring and logging exchanges they hear between other stations.

How to Participate

1. **Get Your Unique Code Groups List:** Before an event, you must email your call sign to RG+owner@groups.io to receive a list of registered random code groups.
2. **Call CQ RG** During the designated event time, call CQ RG or answer others on non-WARC HF bands.
3. **The Exchange:** Send a real signal report (RST) and **one** random code group from your TX List. RSN is the better reporting protocol in these circumstances; with this protocol you provide the other operator with an insight into the challenges you are facing, thus he can tailor his sending to optimise readability.
4. **Logging:** Log the code group you receive from the other station. You can contact the same station multiple times on the same band (no *dupe* restrictions). Just make sure you either call CQ or work another station before logging a *dupe*.
5. **Submit your log:** Email your log listing of only received groups, no callsigns, signal reports or times, to the organiser (RG+owner@groups.io to have your accuracy verified and results published)

To give you an idea of how it works, I ended up logging eight RG QSOs with three different stations (ZL3TK, N1FG & VK2DVA) and received the following 5-letter groups.

A7N67 9RIB6 SJM1D 6O113 UPTNK KJ4VJ GQXKZ GC777

Each group was sent at least twice; in fact, so deep was the QSB with ZL3TK in one QSO, I must have asked for four or five repeats; but I'm confident that I copied the group correctly.

Once confident I had copied the group correctly I sent a "R R QSL QSL TU"; some operators send back what they have copied asking for confirmation. There's no hard and fast rule, so do whatever works for you to ensure you have the group copied correctly.

Next time I hope to log many more RG QSOs, see more local participation, and work more DX ops. Also, Stan has created the *Oceania* team, so if you do participate, please let the organiser know you'd like to join the team when you register.

So, give it a go; the RG Event usually runs for 24 hours, but you only need to put in as much time as you want. Skeds can be arranged via the SKCC Sked page.

For current event schedules and detailed rules, you can visit the [RandomGram Groups.io page](#) or follow updates from Drew Kowal AF2Z on the [QRZ Forums](#).



Munchkin is learning Morse code. Image by NW7US.

Your Club's Courses And Exams Schedule Could Fill This Space

[Contact RASA](#) to send us your details.

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NZART Centennial Conference

NZART was formed in 1926. This makes the 2026 NZART conference the organisation's centennial conference. The conference will run from Saturday May 30 to Monday June 1 and the main venue will be the Waipuna Conference Centre & Hotel in Auckland. The venue is described on the conference website as "Auckland's premier waterfront conference venue, offering modern facilities, accommodation, and easy access to the city."



Planning for the conference began four years ago. Work and other commitments of committee members meant the organising of the conference did not go as quickly as initially anticipated. A very good program is now in place. The program includes three optional off-venue visits as well as the NZART AGM, presentations and staffed displays. IARU Region 3 President Wisnu Widjaja YB0AZ and WIA President Scott Williams VK3KJ will be attending the conference. Timothy Ellam, VE6SH, IARU president, will give an address on the next 100 years of amateur radio.

The presentations will be given on Sunday under the banner of *Exploring Our Future*. The topics for the presentations are: AREC and emergency communications, Awards and YLAGM sessions, Digital modes including FT8, D-Star, Winlink HF data systems, SDR developments, Jock White Memorial Field Day, Coastguard collaboration, Alpine Fault Network, Project Design and Debugging, New to Amateur Radio, RSM Reflections, Repeaters, and Space Telescope.

The program that is now in place bodes well for a memorable conference. Follow [this link](#) for conference registration

Change is afoot for NZART

Invitation

In late April this year, the NZART president Warren ZL2AJ sent a letter to NZART members via the NZART branches. The letter covered several topics. One topic was an invitation to members to tell NZART what they value as a member, and what the members would like NZART to consider. The invitation was extended to non-members.

Since VK and ZL operators have many on the air contacts across the Tasman, VK operators might consider making submissions. The submissions can be sent to president@nzart.org.nz. The deadline for submissions is May 28.

New digital newsletter

NZART has started publishing a new digital newsletter called *Amateur Radio NZ*. The newsletter is part of NZART's efforts to re-image itself.

The first issue of the newsletter was emailed to NZART members on May 5. Unlike NZART's *InfoLine* which is edited by the NZART business manager, *Amateur Radio NZ* is being edited by a NZART councillor, to wit Peter Mott ZL3PWM.

An interesting feature of *Amateur Radio NZ* is that an individual reader can specify which general topics are covered in the reader's copy of the newsletter. The topics are currently News & Announcements, On the Air, Design & Build and Education.

Break-In

Break-In is NZART's six-times a year magazine and journal. Each full NZART member receives a hard copy of the magazine. A digital version of each issue is now made available in the members' area of the NZART website some time after the hardcopy version is published.

The May 5 issue *Amateur Radio NZ* had an article on *Break-In*. The points made in the article were

- *Break-In* costs \$67,150 excl. GST in 2025 to produce. This is approximately \$39 per transmitting member.
- Some members would prefer receiving a digital version of *Break-In* and not a hardcopy.
- The two-month spacing between issues of *Break-In* means the information in an issue can be well out of date.
- The above points, combined with other anecdotal evidence, suggests *Break-In* as it is currently published is not meeting the needs of members and NZART. The article had a link to a one (!) question survey asking whether the reader wanted to receive a hardcopy or digital version of *Break-In*. The results of the survey will be published in *Amateur Radio NZ*.

Virtual Office

Another article in the May 5 issue of *Amateur Radio NZ* was the announcement that from August 2026, NZART's Headquarters will be renamed Member Support and be a virtual office instead of a physical office. The goal of these changes is to eliminate the rental for the physical office and to increase efficiency through the automation of some processes that are currently manual.

Increased Numbers

The number of transmitting NZART members increased from 1713 in 2023 to 1726 in 2024 to 1746 in 2025. While the New Zealand population increased by about the same percentage from 2023 to 2025, any increase in the number of NZART members in the face of stiff competition from other hobbies is a cause for a celebration. I am keen to see if the re-imaging of NZART will lead to larger percentage increases.

GET20

As part of the celebration of this year's World Amateur Radio Day on April 18, NZART ran a one-day on-the-air event called GET20. The goal for each station in the event was to have a QSO with each of 20 different ZL operators. The callsigns for these 20 operators had to include three that started with ZL1, three with ZL2, two with ZL3 and one with ZL4. Any band or mode could be used.

The event was organised just a few days before the World Amateur Radio Day. This late start meant there were not many participants. Nevertheless, the participants I spoke to on the air were enjoying themselves.

Sangster Shield Contest (NZ)

The Sangster Shield Contest is NZART's longest running contest. It has been held every year since 1927 except for 1940 to 1945 when all New Zealand amateur radio stations were shut down and sealed as part of New Zealand's WWII effort.

The shield itself was presented to the NZART by Ralph Sangster in 1927. Sangster was a prominent member of the NZART in its early days. The shield is awarded annually to the CW station obtaining the highest score when using no more than 5W. All contacts must be on 80m. The contest is open to overseas operators.

This year the contest is May 16 from 0800 to 1100 UTC. There are six opening periods of 30 minutes each. Further information, including a detailed set of rules, is available on the [NZART website](#).

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How to Support RASA

RASA, the Radio Amateur Society of Australia, in addition to representing ALL Australian Amateurs to the regulating authority, the ACMA, creates and provides resources for Amateurs. RASA differs from other organisations in that our resources are available to everyone, and at no cost to the end user. None of our resources are “member only”, and our club support resources are available to all Amateur Radio Clubs/Groups. Click on the image to visit the RASA website. Do you think you have skills that will contribute to RASA's work? [Contact us](#); let's talk.



RASA
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- QRM Guru,
- VKRegs
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Foundation Level Study Guide

QTC
Your Gateway to the World of Amateur Radio

QRM.guru
Resolving interference for Amateur Radio

Welcome to Amateur Radio
A Guidebook for newcomers

A Free Amateur Radio Learning Resource

This multimedia learning resource has been developed by RASA and is provided free of charge.

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RASA relies on member fees and donations, so that we can offer our resources free to everyone. We're inviting you to sign up or renew your membership, or simply donate. You can do this at our website: vkradioamateurs.org

RASA Visits Caboolture Radio Club



In early May two members of the RASA team, Ian VK3BUF and Andy VK4KCS called in on a morning session of the Caboolture Radio Club at their clubrooms.

The club has two splendid buildings joined by a covered common area, adjacent to the club radio tower. It is situated on shared acreage with the Caboolture Scouts.

The group was friendly and accommodating, showing off their shack and station facilities. They were interested to learn more about RASA resources available to clubs and our plans for the future. It was a fine opportunity to chat about the challenges that face our hobby today and what is important to their Club members.

Caboolture is often regarded as a suburb of Brisbane, but is a well serviced town in its own right. It is situated upon the Caboolture river, with a population of around 30,000 people.



Andy VK4KCS lives a little South of Brisbane, while Ian VK3BUF and Dianne VK3JDI had driven up from near Melbourne, for a work related visit to a factory further up the coast. It was a good opportunity to call in and meet the members of the CRC committee. Many thanks to Alan VK4TG, the CRC President for facilitating the meeting.

If any other clubs would like to have an information session or Zoom presentation by members of the RASA team, reach out via the main RASA email of info@vkradioamateurs.org.

Images courtesy Caboolture RC Website and FB.



Custom designed QSL cards - 300gsm, 0.31mm, 140 x 90mm, colour, double-sided and matt print.

Prices start at \$70 for 500 QSL cards, designed, printed and air shipping.

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Checkout Eham Reviews at: [VK Budget QSL Cards](#)

For more information contact:

Graeme VK5GG at graememorgan72@hotmail.com



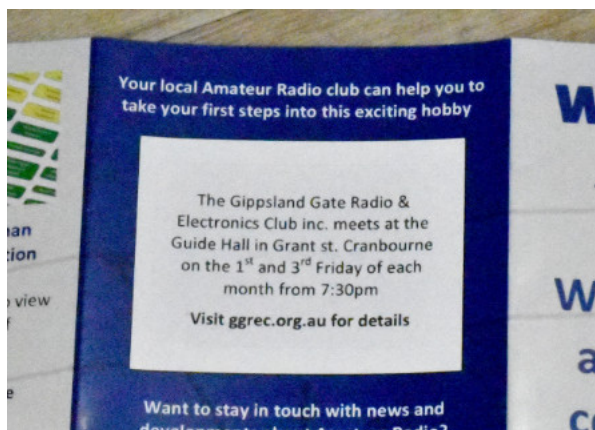
Welcome to Amateur Radio Brochure

In 2025, RASA announced the development and launched a new "Welcome to Amateur Radio" brochure to promote Amateur Radio. This is a general-purpose flyer for any club or group promoting Amateur Radio, and it is available from RASA **at no cost**.

Whenever a group is promoting the hobby in a public space, they can have some of these folded brochures at hand to provide to curious onlookers.



Even though it is good for Amateurs to have a friendly discussion about what we do, it helps to give the person something to take away with them for later consideration.



Printed and Distributed

The brochures have been printed, and a sample amount was mailed to Australian Amateur Radio Clubs, inviting them to order an amount of brochures.

The initiative was a success, with some 10,000 brochures being sent to Amateur Radio clubs in Australia.

If your club would like to obtain some of these brochures, just send an email request to info@vkradioamateurs.org.

There is no cost to clubs, however donations to help offset the cost are appreciated.

The Radio Amateur Society of Australia (RASA)
vkradioamateurs.org



Lord Howe Island DXpedition

By Chris VK3QB

A team of 7 operators (K0BBC, VK3QB, VK3HJ, VK6CQ, VK2PN, VK5BJ, VK5DX) will activate Lord Howe Island (DXCC VK9L) from 1 – 14 June 2026. This will be a DX-Marathon activation, and we will be aiming to work as many DXCC entities and Zones as possible in the 2026 DX Marathon contest.

Of course, this will be a great opportunity for DX-Marathon contestants to get LHI in the log for 2026 as well. We will be using the contest callsign **VJ2L**. This is also a great opportunity for operators to add Lord Howe Island to their DXCC count or fill those much-needed band-slots. Furthermore, those chasing WWFF, POTA, SOTA and IOTA slots can use this opportunity to get much needed QSOs in the log.



We will also be promoting DX Marathon by encouraging greater participation from those in the Oceania region. We are sponsoring a plaque for the Top CW Result for VK in 2026, as well as running a separate mini-awards program.

Visit <https://dxmarathon.com/> to learn more.

The team is pleased to announce that FlexRadio are supporting this activation with the provision of two Aurora 520M radios. For a remote DXpedition like Lord Howe Island, minimizing complexity, transport weight, and potential points of failure is critical, and the Aurora platform directly addresses these challenges.



Each 520M integrates a 500-Watt transceiver, power supply, full SDR transceiver, automatic antenna tuner, and 7-pole filtering into a single 8.5 kg unit. This level of integration significantly reduces the amount of equipment we need to ship, assemble, and maintain on-site.

Already in the planning phase, the impact has been clear. Instead of coordinating separate radios, amplifiers, power supplies, tuners, filters, and extensive cabling, our station setup is streamlined to essentially the radio, a laptop, and operator



accessories. This allows us to focus more on operating time and less on station complexity.

This activation will also serve as a real-world deployment of the Aurora platform in a demanding DXpedition environment, and we look forward to sharing our experience with the wider amateur radio community.

Learn more about the Aurora series here: <https://www.flexradio.com/aurora/>

Our focus will be on 40 metres through 10 metres on CW, FT8 and SSB (no 6 metres and no 160 metres). The decision for 80 metre operation will be made when we arrive on-site. With seven operators we expect to be very active and will structure our schedule around propagation openings and demand.



We will be using a DX-Commander Expedition vertical antenna, it's easy to transport and fast to deploy. And a top performer for DXing. Click on the DX Commander logo to view the product online.

In what we believe is a first, the **VJ2L** team will be providing **VJ2L** award plaques for the following:

1. First past the post – the first CW operator to work us on all bands CW – sponsored by CWops Oceania (VK & ZL excluded. VK & ZL enter the 1000 miles/watt category)
2. First past the post – all bands - FT8
3. First past the post – all bands - SSB
4. 1,000 miles/Watt Award – first past the post CW
5. Certificates for all who achieve 1,000 miles/Watt award

More details about these awards will be provided on our QRZ page closer to the activation.

So, mark **VJ2L** in your diaries. We're excited to operate these new FlexRadio Aurora 520M radios and even more excited to work as many ops as we can on SSB, FT8 and CW.

Finally, please listen out for **VJ2L** in the CWTs. Chris VK3QB #2949 will be using the callsign and aiming to make a splash from the South Pacific.

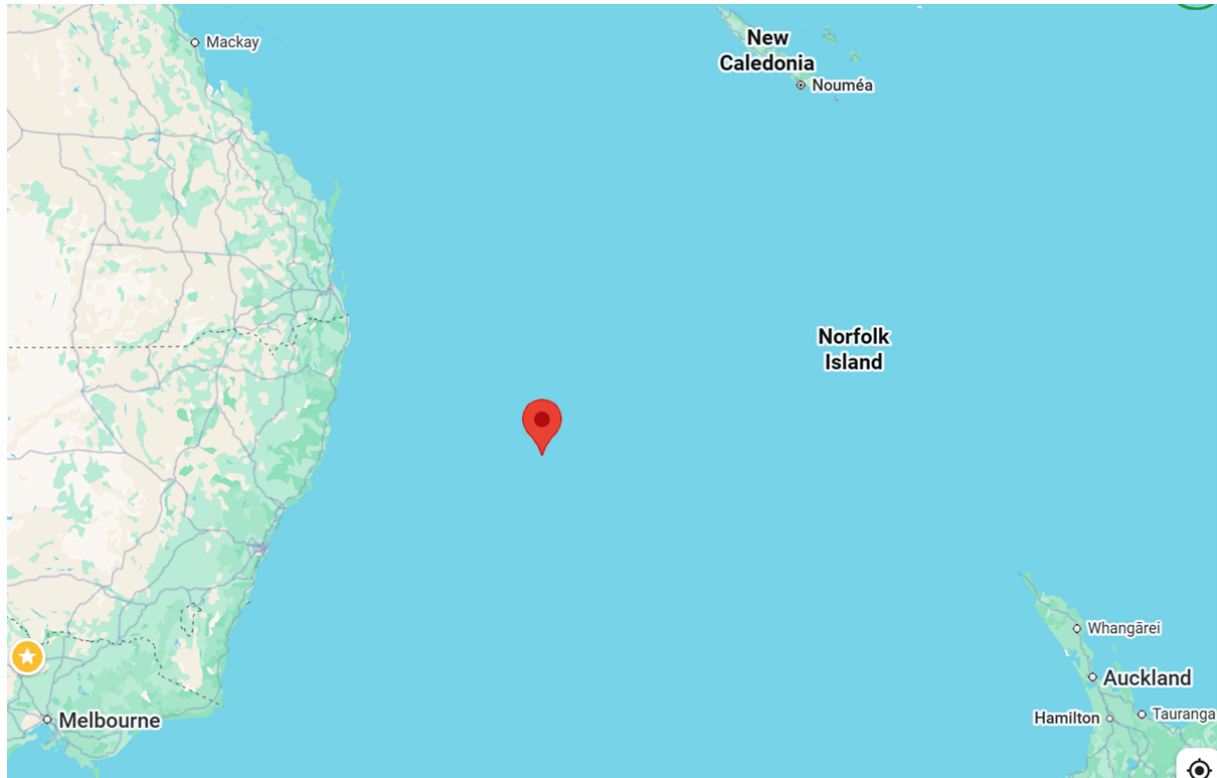
If you have any questions, please contact Chris VK3QB. Refer qrz.com for contact details. Charles, M0OXO will be looking after QSL services. www.m0oxo.com

Subject to ongoing tests and internet reliability, we plan to run Clublog Live Stream.

Lord Howe Island is a UNESCO World Heritage-listed volcanic remnant in the Tasman Sea, located about 600km east of Port Macquarie, Australia. Renowned for its pristine beaches, Kentia palms, and rare birdlife, it offers top-tier diving at the world's southernmost coral reef and hiking up Mt Gower.

Only 400 visitors are allowed at once, ensuring an exclusive, nature-focused experience.

Note: The Australian regulator changed the callsign allocation for Lord Howe Island from VK9 to VK2 with the introduction of the Class Licence in 2023 (effective date 19 February 2024). Of course, Lord Howe Island remains its own DXCC entity and is recognised by most logging programs and awards programs as VK9L. So, when you log **VJ2L**, check it's recorded as DXCC VK9L. Queries to VK3QB.



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Contests

Contests Coming Up...all times are UTC

May 16 0800 - 1100 Don Edwards Memorial Slow Morse 80m

May 17 0300 - 0600 Don Edwards Memorial Slow Morse 40
St George Amateur Radio Society. [Contest Details.](#)

May 16 ,17 1200-1200 - Days 1 & 2 . EU PSK Dx Contest. Rules [HERE](#)

May 30 - 31 Days 1 & 2 CQ WPX CW Contest.
Starts: 0000 UTC Saturday, Ends: 2359 UTC Sunday. Rules [HERE](#)

June 6 00:00 to June 7 00:00
VK Shires Contest. Description and Rules [HERE](#)

And there are more - contests of all types. There is a contest calendar [HERE](#) that is maintained by Alan VK4SN.

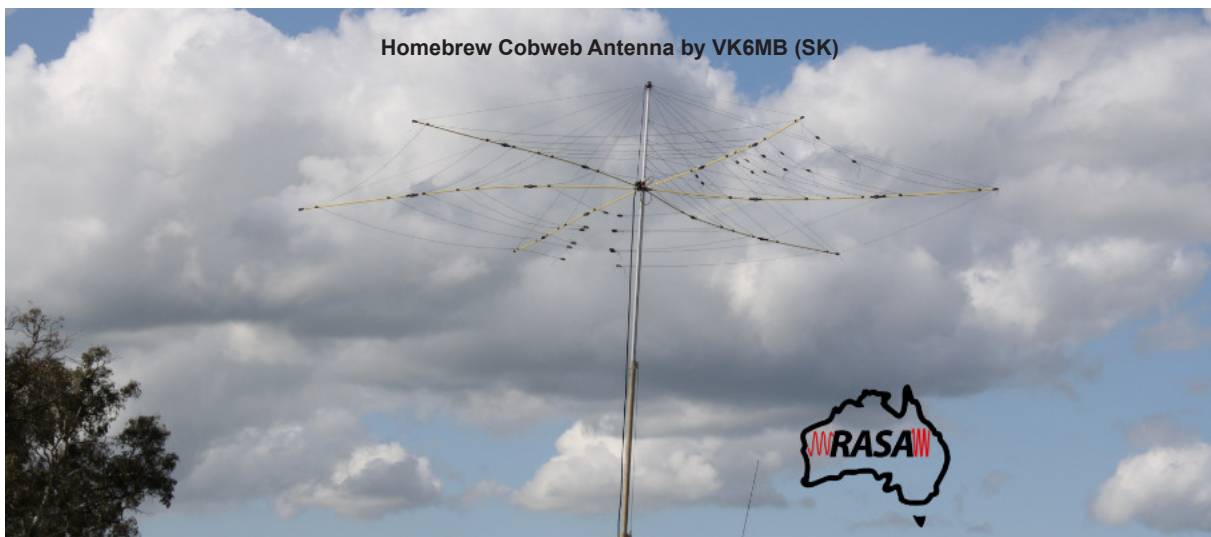
The Contest Minefield

Looking through the results for the John Moyle Memorial Field Days reminded me that I should pay more attention to the contest classification. For instance, my entry was in the HF, Single Operator Home Station 24 hour Category, and I came 28th out of a field of 47. Sort of mid field I reckon. Looking further down the results, I could have gained first place in another category by recruiting another Amateur to help on my station.

The HF Multi-one Home category consisted of a field of two stations. Had I recruited someone to join me, we would have come first in a field of three, going on the score I had obtained.

What I'm getting to is that a person or a team could "get a gong" by operating within a category of fewer players.

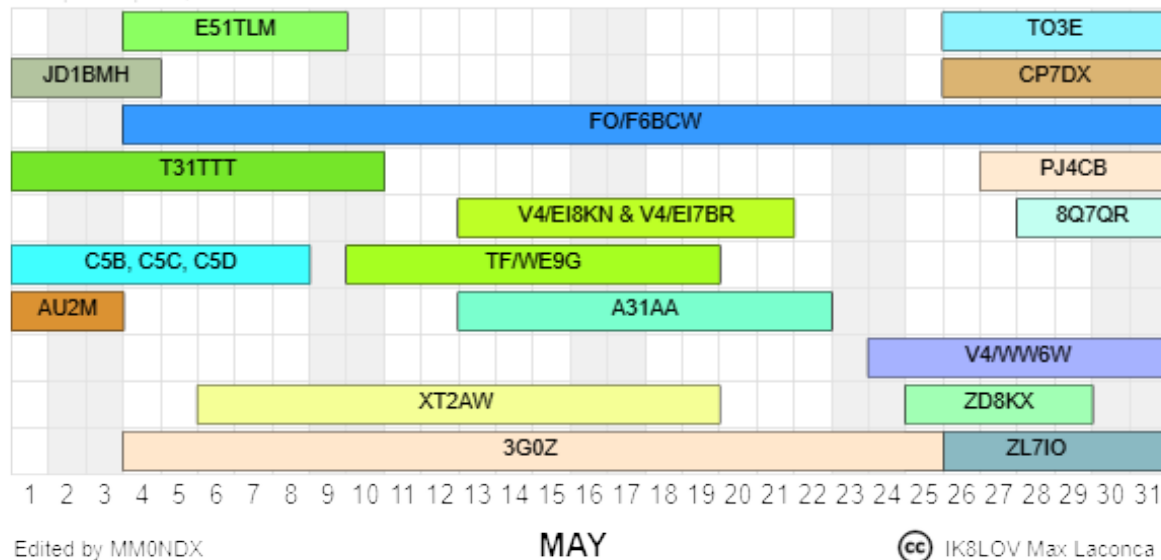
There are some who say winning isn't everything, and for certain I enter these contests with an almost certain view that I won't win. I'm in it for the fun and all that stuff. But when you do come first, second or third, a slightly smug grin is permissible.



DX Happenings

DX WORLD_{net} FEATURED DXPEDITIONS TIMELINE

Last update: April 29, 2026



Below is a selection of Dxpeditons. More may be found on the DXWorld website. Click on the image above to visit the website.



Fer, M0HXC (also ZB2KX) announces that he will be active from Ascension Island as ZD8KX during May 25-29, 2026. QRV using an IC-705 and EFHW antenna (66ft / 20m). This will be a low power activity on CW, SSB & FT8/4/2. QSL via QRZ.com (no LoTW or eQSL). More info [here](#).



A31AA

Kingdom of Tonga

DX-WORLD.NET

Takio Hata, JH3QFL informs DX-World that he will be active from Nuku'alofa, Tongatapu Island, Kingdom of Tonga, as A31AA from May 13 to 22, 2026. QRV on 80-6m; FT8. Bands: 80m to 6m. QSL Direct to JH3QFL or LoTW.



DX-WORLD.NET

Yosuke, JJ1DQR (of DX-World Japan) let's us know that he will be active from Male, Maldives as 8Q7QR during May 28 to June 1, 2026. QRV holiday-style; 160-6m. Participation in the CQ WPX CW contest. QSL via H/c (direct or buro).



Rikk, WE9G will be active from Borg, Iceland as TF/WE9G during May 10-19, 2026. Grid: HP94ob. QRV mostly on FT8 with some CW and SSB. QSO uploads to Club Log, QRZ, and LoTW will be real-time (and free) as usual. QSL via WE9G for direct/bureau and via VP9/WE9G for Club Log OQRS, QRZ, LoTW. More [HERE](#).



Manu, CE3YMR announces that he will be QRV from Easter Island in June with the callsign 3G0YM.

During the expedition he plans to operate on 6m, 10m, 20m, and 40m; FT8 and SSB. More details [here](#).

For the upcoming activation from Easter Island, the equipment to be used has been confirmed.

– ICOM IC-7300 – 100 watts.

– Yaesu FT-891 – 100 watts.

Both radios will be used in standard operating mode, allowing operation on different HF bands depending on propagation conditions.

Graphics and information
courtesy of DXWorld





Club Support

RASA supports Amateur Radio Clubs in various ways. Our supports and resources are provided free, and there is no requirement of membership or affiliation.

RASA's interest is "what is good for Amateur Radio".

Does your club conduct courses and exams for Amateur Radio Qualifications?

- The Foundation Level Study Guide is structured around the syllabus set by the ACMA for the Foundation level qualification. This electronic publication contains live links to instructional videos and other supporting information. The FLSG is available as a PDF download, or to read on screen. The FLSG is FREE to everyone.
- The Introduction to Amateur Radio Guidebook contains a lot of useful information for newcomers to the hobby, and perhaps even those returning to it.
- RASA will publish your club's provided contact information in the Foundation Level Study Guide, and on the RASA website. Your club must provide the information, we will not harvest it.

Is your club planning something in the public space?

- RASA has developed a brochure called "Welcome to Amateur Radio". This brochure contains the sort of information that you're likely to tell a member of the public that you engage in a conversation. Giving the brochure to the person reinforces that information, and give the person a means of following up.
- The brochure has a space on it where you can affix a label containing club contact information, meeting place and times etc.
- These brochures are available free from RASA on request. Although the brochures are free, a donation to cover postage would be appreciated.
- Contact RASA by email to info@vkradioamateurs.org

RASA will talk to your club

- If physically practical, a RASA team member can visit your club to talk about RASA
- If a visit is not practical, and after all Australia is a huge place, we can do a presentation to your club via ZOOM.
- Similarly we can have a presence at Hamfests, again where practicable.



**Radio for the
Curious & Creative**
The Radio Amateur Society of Australia



info@vkradioamateurs.org